

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANAGU 03554 031702Z
ACTION SS-25

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O R 031627Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7333
INFO USICA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 3554

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, PINS, SHUM, PGOV, NU
SUBJECT: MEDIA COVERAGE OF REPORTS ON PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER

REF: MANAGUA 3201 (NOTAL)

1. RADIO COVERAGE OF REPORTS ON PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER
TO PRESIDENT SOMOZA HAS BEEN LIGHT, BUT NEWSPAPERS HAVE
FEATURED STORY PROMINENTLY.

2. LA PRENSA ON 1 AUGUST USED AP WIRE SERVICE STORY WITHOUT
EDITORIAL COMMENT--PROBABLY BECAUSE OF NEWSPAPER'S DEADLINE.
NOVEDADES, HOWEVER, IN ITS 2 AUGUST EDITION MADE STORY ITS
BANNER HEADLINE SAYING "CARTER CONGRATULATES SOMOZA...U.S.
SECURITY
COUNCIL STIMULATES GON...RECOGNITION OF RESPECT FOR HUMAN
RIGHTS." ITS STORY, HOWEVER, IS AN EFE WIRE SERVICE ONE
WHICH IS VERY CLOSE IN CONTENT TO AP VERSION.

3. LA PRENSA ON 2 AUGUST AGAIN CONFINED ITS COVERAGE
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TO AN EFE WIRE SERVICE STORY. NOVEDADES, ON 3 AUGUST,
BEGAN, AS EXPECTED, MORE EXTENSIVE COVERAGE. AN ARTICLE
ON PAGE THREE, HEADLINED "WHITE HOUSE AND DEPARTMENT OF
STATE ACT IN AGREEMENT...CARTER'S LETTER: POSITIVE
REINFORCEMENT FOR SOMOZA," OCCUPIED 25 PERCENT OF THE
PAGE. THE ARTICLE WAS A SUMMARY OF ONE APPEARING IN THE
2. AUGUST WASHINGTON POST AND EMPHASIZED REX GRANUM'S

STATEMENT OF THAT DAY. IN AN EDITORIAL ENTITLED, "RECOGNITION OF NICARAGUAN DEMOCRACY," NOVEDDES SAYS, "THE LETTER, VERY SIGNIFICANT, RECOGNIZES THE EFFORTS OF THE GON TO MAINTAIN CIVIC RIGHTS UNHARMED DESPITE THE CONSTANT AGGRESSION TO WHICH THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT IS SUBJECT FROM INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM SUPPORTED BY FIDEL CASTRO RUIZ. THE NOTE FROM CARTER...RECOGNIZES A MAN PREOCCUPIED WITH THE GOOD MARCH OF DEMOCRACY IN THE COUNTRY." CITING GRANUM'S STATEMENT THAT THE WHITE HOUSE AND DEPARTMENT ACTED "IN MUTUAL AGREEMENT," THE EDITORIAL CONTINUES THAT THIS "INDICATES THAT THE DEPARTMENT CONSIDERS PLAUSIBLE THE WORK OF THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT IN AMTTERS OF HUMAN RIGHTS."

4. CONTINUING, THE EDITORIAL SAYS, "IN THE NORTHAMERICAN CONGRESS ARE REPRESENTATIVES WHO ARE AWARE THAT NICARAGUA IS A COUNTRY IN WHICH THERE ARE ELECTIONS, WHERE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS EXISTS AND (WHOSE GOVERNMENT IS) THE TARGET OF MINORITY SUBVERSION FROM WITHOUT WHOSE ONLY GOAL IS TO GAIN CONTROL OF A VITAL ZONE IN THE DEFENSE OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE, AS NICARAGUA IS THE VERY CENTER, THE NAVEL, OF AMERICA. IT IS EVIDENT THAT THESE REPRESENTATIVES ARE FULLY AWARE OF EVENTS IN NICARAGUA AND OF THE FOREIGN INFLUENCES WHICH OPERATE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT HEADED BY SOMOZA DEBAYLE." THE EDITORIAL GOES ON TO SAY THAT THERE ARE CONGRESSMEN WHO INSIST UPON NICARAGUA'S IN-CONFIDENTIAL

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CLUSION IN ANY FOREIGN AID BILL AND NOTES THAT, OF A PROPOSED AID TOTAL OF 8 BILLION DOLLARS, NICARAGUA IS PROGRAMMED FOR A "RIDICULOUS" 1.5 MILLION DOLLARS IN MILITARY AID AND THAT MUCH MORE GOES TO COUNTRIES WHICH VIOLATE HUMAN RIGHTS.

5. THE EDITORIAL CONCLUDES THAT, "THERE EXISTS A MOVEMENT IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE UNITED STATES WHERE, DESPITE THE PAID DEFAMATORY CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE GON BY ELEMENTS LACKING PATRIOTISM, THE EFFORTS OF PRESIDENT SOMOZA TO MAINTAIN A CLIMATE OF DEMOCRACY ARE APPRECIATED, EVEN WHEN, IN DIFFERENT FORMS, CONSTITUTIONALITY AND THE ESTABLISHED ORDER ARE ATTACKED."

6. ALSO IN NOVEDADES ON 3 AUGUST, WAS A SHORT ARTICLE BEGINNING PAGE 2 IN WHICH THE GON PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SECRETARY CONFIRMED THAT SOMOZA HAD RECEIVED A LETTER FROM PRESIDENT CARTER AND THAT HE HAD SENT A THANK YOU LETTER IN RETURN. THE STORY WENT ON TO QUOTE SOMOZA AS SAYING HE WOULD CONTINUE TO FIGHT THE CONTINUED "SUBVERSION AND PROVOCATION OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM WHICH TAKES ADVANTAGE OF CIVIL LIBERTIES TO ATTEMPT TO

HINDER THE MARCH OF DEMOCRACY IN NICARAGUA."

7. COMMENT: AS EXPECTED, THE GON IS ATTEMPTING TO
SQUEEZE OUT MAXIMUM PUBLIC RELATIONS MILEAGE NOW THAT
THE LETTER'S EXISTANCE IS PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE, WITHOUT
RELEASING ACTUAL TEXT. SURPRISINGLY, LA PRENSA HAS YET
TO MAKE EDITORIAL COMMENT.
TUCKER

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Message Attributes

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